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THE PSYCHOLOGICAL VIEW OF SOCIETY

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Auguste Comte suggested, in the later years of his life, that all sciences might be reduced to two great general sciences, physics and sociology, the former dealing with all the phenomena of the physical universe, the latter dealing with all the phenomena of human society. The sociologist of today, however, would acknowledge that it is more reasonable to suggest that the two master sciences are, not physics and sociology, but physics and psychology. He would not claim for his science the proud position which Comte claimed for it, but would rather subordinate it to psychology. This is due to the fact that the modern view of the world recognizes the clear distinction between the objective and the subjective, between the physical and the psychical; and this recognition has led inevitably to the recognition of psychology as the master science of the subjective, or psychical; just as physics has been elevated to the central position among the physical sciences, so modern thought has elevated psychology to the central position among all those sciences which deal in any way with the psychical or its products.

Comte did not deny the existence of psychology, but he subordinated it partly to biology (organic physics), and partly to sociology. This was due, in part, to his materialistic world-view, but even more to the fact that psychology in his time had not developed sufficiently to have even an independent position among the sciences. Comte, in other words, could not have subordinated sociology to psychology without being misunderstood. At present, however, conditions are reversed; the development of psychology, and of modern science generally, has made it evident that sociology must be subordinated partly to biology (organic physics) on the one hand, and partly to psychology on the other. It needs no extended argument to show that sociology is much

more psychological in its subject-matter than biological; that is, that it is much more dependent upon psychology than upon biology. Human society presents itself as a plexus of interactions, or interrelations, between individuals. Now these interactions between individuals are very largely interactions of thought, feeling, and will. So largely are they psychical, that we rarely stop to think of their physical side at all. Mind itself, indeed, was apparently largely developed to perfect these interactions. The interrelations between individuals which go to make up society, in other words, are dominantly psychical, and all explanations of human society must be largely a matter of the psychology of these relations. Disregarding the biological aspect of society, the social sciences, therefore, present themselves as very largely extensions of psychology into practical human affairs. This is especially true of sociology; for the special social sciences deal with the more specialized products of social activity which are relatively more removed from the purely psychical, while sociology deals with the associational process itself, which is directly dependent upon psychical activities. Hence, modern sociology acknowledges the suzerainty of psychology.

Neither to the psychologist nor to the sociologist, but only to the generality, is it necessary to say that this reasoning by no means makes sociology merely a section of general psychology. The problems of the two sciences remain distinct, and therefore, in the scientific division of labor, there will always be room for the two sciences. Pure psychology necessarily concerns itself with immediate experience, that is, with the forms and mechanism of consciousness; while sociology concerns itself with the problems of the interrelations or interactions of individuals and of the resulting social organization and evolution. The latter problems are, however, dependent for their adequate solution upon the solution of the former. An adequate view of human society can only be developed when we have an adequate view of human nature. The development of psychology during the past fifteen years has, accordingly, not only revealed human nature, but also human society, in new lights. While it may still be premature to announce in detail the view of human society which modern

psychology necessitates, yet it is not too early to attempt to sketch in outline that view; and such is the purpose of this paper.

Put in a sentence, the psychological view of society is, that it is a mass of interactions, of interstimulations and responses, between individuals, not haphazard, but regular, co-ordinated, and controlled, working, for the most part, toward definite ends, and making groups true functional unities, ruled by habit largely, but, like all organic unities, undergoing adaptive changes which are themselves regular and which, moreover, give rise to the most important socio-psychical phenomena. Analyzed, this statement means that the essence of society is mental interaction, i. e., interstimulation and response; and that the fundamental fact with which the sociologist has to deal is this interaction, this interstimulation and response, between individuals. It is this interstimulation and response which makes up all social phenomena and which is, therefore, the subject-matter of all the social sciences, and particularly of sociology. The significant thing for the sociologist, however, is not that these interactions between individuals exist, but that they are regular; not haphazard, but co-ordinated and controlled. Without this regularity in the forms of interaction between individuals, social science in general would be impossible, for the object of all scientific study of society is to discover regularity in social activity, that is, in the forms of interstimulation and response among individuals.

This regularity and co-ordination in mental interaction, interstimulation, and response, which brings to unity of aim the activities of individuals, may be called the social co-ordination, just as the bringing to a unity of aim of physical and psychical processes in the body is called a co-ordination. This co-ordination of individuals in activity is, of course, what makes group action possible. It creates the unity of the group; and the co-ordinations that persist, become habitual, form the very substance of permanent social organization, and, as has already been said, it is the changes in these social co-ordinations, the breaking-down of old ones and the building-up of new ones, which give rise to the most important phenomena of collective psychical life. We are justified in concluding, therefore, that the most important,

and practically most fundamental, fact for the sociologist is this co-ordination of individuals in activity—the social co-ordination.¹

To trace out the mechanism of the origin, development, and forms of these co-ordinations constitutes, then, the task of the sociologist from the psychological point of view. But in doing this his point of view is necessarily that of the group, not that of the individual, for the individual in his instinctive and habitual reactions only gives at most the starting-point for these co-ordinations. The real reason for the existence of such co-ordinations must always be found in the carrying-on of a common life-process by a group of individuals, else they would not exist. The co-ordinations, in other words, are co-ordinations of individuals in function, and the group must be considered as a functional unity in order to understand them.

Hence is justified methodologically the sociological point of view—the view of the group as a functional unity, and the interpretation of its phenomena from the standpoint of its collective life, from the standpoint of the mass as a whole. The sociologist does not consider the individual as such but only as a functioning element in the larger whole; while the psychologist, on the contrary, considers the social whole only to throw light on individual experience as such. The study of interstimulation and response from the side of the individual would show only half of the whole process. Even in the interests of abstract science, it is quite as important that the process be studied from the point of view of the larger unity if the interstimulations and responses of individuals are determined, more or less, upon the basis of the needs and interests of a collective life-process. The process of individual interaction, to be sure, is dominantly a psychical process, in that its dominant elements are psychical; but it is, nevertheless, a social, not an individual, process and can be understood only from the social point of view—that is, from the point of view of the collective life of a group. The sociolo-

¹ I first used the term "social co-ordination" in an article in the *American Journal of Sociology* for May, 1899. The term was used earlier by Professor Giddings in his *Principles of Sociology*, pp. 388–90. Lately Dr. M. M. Davis has described the same phenomenon (in his *Psychological Interpretations of Society*) with the term "co-adaptation."

gist, then, has to interpret the forms of the regular co-ordinated actions between individuals, and the changes which take place in them, from the standpoint of a collective life-process.

The biological origin of social co-ordinations need not concern the psychological sociologist as such.² It is sufficient for him to note that the instincts of all individuals of a social species are made so that they fit into one another, so to speak; so that their instinctive reactions are co-ordinated with one another. In the social groups of man, moreover, these instinctive reactions are modified so through habit that the adjustment of the activities of individuals to each other reaches such a high degree of perfection that groups often act with the spontaneity and certainty of individual units. Through instinct and habit, then, wrought out under social conditions, the activities of individuals become socially co-ordinated; and practically the psychological sociologist has to start his interpretation of the social life with these social co-ordinations. Just as the psychologist cannot get back of organic activity and have anything left of mental life, so the sociologist cannot get back of social activity and have anything left of social life, for we do not think of the group as a unity except in connection with its activities. The social co-ordination is the sign of social relationships, social organization, social life, throughout the animal scale. Individuals living together in mere proximity cannot be said to have social relationships until they become functionally related to each other as parts of some functioning whole. In a psychological interpretation of society, therefore, we must begin with concerted or co-ordinated activity, with the group acting together in some particular way, for it is this which constitutes the group a functional unity, and which is the first psychic manifestation of group life.

It may be objected that what we have called the social co-ordination is nothing more than social co-operation under another name. But social co-ordination, as already implied, does not necessarily mean that the relationship is one of mutual aid. It may be one of exploitation, or even of modified hostility. There

² See my article on "The Origin of Society" in the *American Journal of Sociology* for November, 1909.

is, however, it must be admitted, no objection to employing the phrase "social co-operation" in a very broad way to designate the sum of social co-ordinations for social co-operation in this broadest sense is made up of social co-ordinations; popularly, however, social co-operation is used in a much narrower sense as implying a high degree of reflective consciousness on the part of the individuals whose activity is co-ordinated. Even by some scientific writers the term co-operation is used in exactly this way. Thus, we find Professor Giddings, for example, saying, "There can be no co-operation except among those who are, in good degree, like minded, and who are so far conscious of their agreement that they can intelligently plan their common activity." It is manifest that such social co-operation as Professor Giddings is speaking of, implies a high degree of reflective consciousness which hardly exists until man is reached in the animal scale and is not present even in many human groups. The term "social co-ordination" has been used to express the connection between the activities of a mass of individuals living together and carrying on, through interstimulation and response, a common life-process, because it is a colorless term, not implying the high degree of consciousness which sometimes attaches to the phrase "social co-operation." Manifestly, as has already been said, all social organization is an outcome of social co-ordination and social co-ordination can, therefore, be regarded as synonymous with social co-operation only in the sense that all social organization implies co-operation.

Social co-ordinations have both objective and subjective expressions in the collective life. Their objective expression is chiefly in those relatively uniform and universal ways of action to which Professor Sumner has given the name "folkways." The folkways are simply regular modes of social activity in a given group of people. The better expression would probably be social habits, since these regular modes of social activity are not, by any means, confined to the large group which we term a folk or a people, but are found in the smallest groups of society as well. Every family group, for example, illustrates these regular modes of social activity which we have termed social co-ordinations. The family, indeed, beautifully illustrates the whole

matter of social interaction and social co-ordination; for the activity of each member of a family group is co-ordinated in very definite and regular ways with the activity of all the other members of his group. Just as every co-ordination in the individual that persists is termed a habit, so every co-ordination that persists in a social group may be termed a social habit. In those large groups which we term peoples there is, of course, no objection to calling these regular modes of social activity "folkways," as Professor Sumner does.

Of course, there are many other ways in which social co-ordinations express themselves objectively. As we have already repeatedly said, the whole matter of social organization is simply a matter of the types of social co-ordination that persist among the members of a given group, that is, all the forms or modes of association are simply different objective expressions of social co-ordination. All of the objective regularities and uniformities in society, may, therefore, be looked at as so many objective expressions of social co-ordination. A custom, for example, is but a social habit which has persisted long enough in a people to gain a certain prestige, while what we call institutions are but sanctioned forms of association, or of social co-ordination.

The analysis of the various types of social co-ordinations has, as yet, only just begun. It is evident, however, that the types of co-ordination between individuals are as complex as human nature itself, and that an analysis of society into its various types of social co-ordination would be practically equivalent to an analysis of social structure as a whole. All possible co-ordinations between individuals exist, and hence, an infinite variety in the forms of human association. The honor of beginning a serious study of the various types of social co-ordination, that is, of the forms of association, belongs to Professor Simmel, of the University of Berlin, but his analysis is very far from satisfying. What he has studied chiefly are the empty forms of association, that is, the forms themselves without definite content, such as equality, superiority, subordination, and the like. He omits, for example, such common forms of social co-ordination as are seen in the family such as husband and wife, parent and child. For a full

understanding, however, of the types of social co-ordination, we must consider not merely their empty form, but also their content.³ It is apparently an inexhaustible task to classify and arrange the various types of persistent interaction between individuals. The progress of sociology as a science is, however, not dependent upon any exhaustive enumeration or classification of the types of social interaction. Rather, sociology must show the way in which types of social co-ordination arise and are changed into other types and the significance of the principal types for the collective life of man.

But the subjective expressions of social co-ordination are of not less importance than the objective expressions in folkways, customs, institutions, and social organization. Those subjective expressions are to be found in the mental attitudes which the individuals of the group maintain toward each other. A group of individuals carrying on a common life-process through inter-stimulation and response, must maintain certain habitual psychical attitudes toward each other in order that they may respond quickly and effectively, each to the stimulus which the activity of the others affords. Hence, the significance of feelings, emotions, ideas, and beliefs in all forms of human social organization. Feelings, emotions, ideas, and beliefs are, on the one hand expressions of common life-activities, and on the other, they powerfully reinforce and direct those activities. The family group again illustrates the matter beautifully. The mental attitude of the members of a family toward one another is an expression of their common group life and group activities. Corresponding to their habitual modes of interaction, are certain feelings, or emotional attitudes, and even certain ideas and beliefs. Thus, the social co-ordinations of husband and wife, parent and child, are each subjectively expressed by appropriate feeling, or emotional attitudes.

Inasmuch as the family group is organized largely on an instinctive basis, the subjective expressions of its co-ordinations

³ Professor Cooley in his *Social Organization* and Professor Ross in his *Foundations of Sociology* seem to me to have begun a much more fruitful analysis of the forms of association.

are chiefly in feeling and emotional attitudes. Hence, we ordinarily think of such relationships as husband and wife, parent and child, in terms of feeling. In larger social groups, however, built up chiefly upon the basis of acquired habits, common ideas and beliefs may be the chief expression of social co-ordination; but in any case, habitual modes of interaction must come to have attached to them certain feeling tones in the individuals concerned—that is, they must give rise to certain feeling attitudes of certain individuals toward each other. In animal groups, where the interactions are almost wholly instinctive, not much more than the feeling attitude may exist as the subjective accompaniment of social co-ordination, but in human societies, with their larger element of acquired habit, the chief subjective expressions of social co-ordination are frequently common ideas and beliefs; thus, in a modern nation, unity of action and of life is secured partly through sentiments like patriotism, but even more through certain generally accepted ideas and beliefs. Such generally accepted ideas and beliefs, which form the psychical basis of institutions, may be called “co-ordinating ideas.” The importance of such co-ordinating ideas in human social and institutional life, although first emphasized by Comte, has not as yet been adequately investigated by sociologists.

The whole matter of uniformities of feeling, belief, and opinion in social groups evidently, then, must be studied in connection with social co-ordinations if it is to be understood; for the mental attitudes of individuals toward each other and toward their group as a whole are expressions of the way in which they are socially co-ordinated. These subjective expressions of social co-ordination are, of course, also marks of incipient stages of new forms of social organization as well as of existing forms; for it is manifest that in a group of individuals carrying on a common life-process through interstimulation and response, mental attitudes mark the beginning of new co-ordinations, or common activities, as well as those co-ordinations that have become fixed as social habits.

Thus far in this discussion, our point of view has been that of the social habit, and it may be well to note a little more fully

the nature of social habits. As has already been said, social habits are simply social co-ordinations that persist. In their various modifications they are known, in the larger human groups, as folkways, customs, manners, morals, laws, institutions, and the like. In brief, all the tangible uniformities of the social life are social habits. It is evident that they rest partly on instincts, partly on acquired habits. As has already been noted, in all social species, the instincts of individuals are made so that they fit into each other, as it were, and provide certain social co-ordinations to start with. This is especially true of man—human family life, as we have just seen, illustrating these instinctive co-ordinations between individuals. Hence, the instinctive origin of human society—a doctrine now generally accepted by psychologists and sociologists alike. But it is also true that in man these social habits are largely acquired. While the original or instinctive co-ordinations between human individuals may be numerous, yet on account of the complexity of man's social life, these original social co-ordinations have become overlaid with a vast mass of acquired social habits that are even more important for the distinctive character of human society than the instinctive co-ordinations. Hence the need in human society of definite forms of mental interaction, or interstimulation and response, whereby every individual may acquire the habits of his group. Hence also why human groups have developed such definite forms of interstimulation and response, as oral and written language, and superior types of suggestion and imitation.

But we must now leave the point of view of social habit, and ask what happens when social habits change, for we know that in social groups, as in individuals, habitual ways of action are continually being modified. The social co-ordination that exists today in a group of individuals may no longer exist tomorrow. Even the type of co-ordination itself changes. Now, in a group of individuals carrying on a common life-process by interstimulation and response, there must be some very definite mechanism by which habitual ways of interaction are modified or even radically changed. That mechanism is found in the various forms of communication and in other simpler forms of interstimulation,

such as suggestion. Psychologists, as a rule, have had little to say about communication, probably because it is so obviously a social process. At any rate, all that we know goes to show that communication is a device to carry on a common life-process among several distinct, though psychically interacting, individual units. All the higher forms of communication had their origin in the needs of, and exist for the sake of perfecting, a common life. Indeed, it may be well argued that the distinctive mark which separates human society from animal groups and which makes it, to some extent, separate and unique, is the possession of language, or articulate speech. In the transition from one social habit to another, in the breaking-down of one social co-ordination and in the building-up of another, then, various forms of communication come in to mediate the process. Just as in the individual the transition from one habit to another is marked by processes of discrimination, so in the social group the transition from one social habit to another is marked by processes of criticism and discussion. When anything goes wrong with the working of a social habit, various appreciations of the social situation are communicated from one individual to another. Public criticism marks, then, the bad working or the breaking-down of some social co-ordination. Discussion of the whole social situation comes in to pick out the elements in the old habit that are unworkable and to select those that may be made the basis of a new habit. Discussion works in society, therefore, very largely as the association of ideas works in the individual mind. Through discussion certain elements in the situation, objective stimuli, or ideas, are selected and fixed upon by the group for the building-up of a new co-ordination. When the ideas for the building-up of the new co-ordination have become relatively settled we have what is called the formation of a public opinion. In order to carry out this public opinion there is usually necessary the selection of certain individuals that are judged to be especially fitted to carry out the new social policy and we have the phenomena of leadership, and of authority resulting. Along with these more tangible processes of intercommunication, there are, of course, those less tangible processes of interstimulation, such as various forms of

suggestion and imitation. At any rate, the mechanism by which the transition from one social habit to another is effected must be made up of various forms of interstimulation and response, and among the more important of these are public criticism, free discussion, public opinion and conscious social selection of ideas and individuals. It is obvious that without these the process of social change, of continuous readjustment in society, could not go on; that new habits adapted to the new life-conditions could not replace the old habits which are no longer adapted.

Here must be briefly noted the function of imitation in this process of continuous social readjustment. As Professor Baldwin has insisted, imitation, in its broadest sense, is undoubtedly the chief means of propagating acquired uniformities in human society. Its exact function, as just pointed out, is to mediate in the formation of those social co-ordinations, where uniform, concerted activity is desirable. It comes in, therefore, to assist in building up most social habits. The error of the imitation sociologists consists in fixing attention upon but one element in the building-up of social co-ordinations, rather than upon the whole process. The tacit assumption of the imitation theorists is that it is the uniformity or likeness of activity which makes social co-ordination, society, possible; whereas unlikeness of activity is necessary for many of the higher forms of social co-ordination. In the family, for example, while imitation smoothes the way for many adjustments, yet many of the co-ordinations between its members are possible only because of original and acquired differences. Imitation does not, therefore, enter into all social relationships—that is, into all forms of interstimulation and response. It is, however, the great and indispensable means of bringing about unity in a group when uniform concerted action is necessary or desirable. Hence, all social species, including man, are highly imitative. The tendency to imitate, therefore, like communication, must be regarded as an outcome, an instrument, of the social life, not its basis.

Ordinarily, the process of continuous readjustment in society, the breaking-down of old social habits and the building-up of new ones, goes on without shock or disturbance. Changes must

come, habits must be continually modified, in social life as well as in individual life. Variations constantly arise in individuals and in the environment, making old social habits no longer workable. Through processes of discussion, suggestion, imitation, the formation of a group opinion, the selection of ideas and ideals, a new social co-ordination is built up which, if it works well, persists and becomes a new social habit. This process often goes on without the individual even being conscious of change; but sometimes a new and harmonious co-ordination cannot be built up, for a sufficient stimulus for its construction cannot be found. It is here that much of the tragedy of social life comes in, for it is here that the opportunity for conflict and hostility within the group arises. Let us illustrate again from the family life. Parent and child may have a certain co-ordination—a certain habitual attitude toward each other, which works well during the child's younger years; but the parent often forgets that that co-ordination and his attitude must be modified with the child's growth. As a consequence, the old social co-ordination is maintained too long, and when it finally breaks down no adequate stimulus may be found for the building-up of a new harmonious co-ordination. Hence conflict often arises between parent and child. It is the same with the relations of husband and wife and with all other social relations. Conflict of individuals within a group arises, then, through the failure to build up new social co-ordinations adapted to new life-conditions so that the individuals of a group may form a stable environment with reference to each other. The result is a conflict of habits and the possible disintegration of the group. Conflict of one social group with another is, of course, an entirely different matter.

It is the same in the wider social organization of nations and peoples as in the more intimate social relations of smaller groups. Normally, a people's institutions are continually changing; old institutions are gradually replaced by new ones as life-conditions change. Normally, the breakdown of an old institution is so gradual that by the time it disappears a new institution adapted to the new life-conditions is ready to take its place. The change has been brought about from one social form to another through

such peaceful means as public criticism, free discussion, the formation of a public opinion and the selection of individuals to carry out the line of action socially determined upon. But where these means of effecting social readjustments are lacking, or imperfectly developed, social habits may become relatively fixed and immobile. Now, a society, like an individual whose habits become inflexible, is bound to have trouble. As I tried to show several years ago,⁴ it is from such conditions that those vast social disturbances which we term revolutions with their bloody conflicts between classes arise. My theory of revolutions, in other words, is that they are due to certain interferences in the mechanism by which normal social readjustment is accomplished; that is, they are disturbances in the social order due to the breakdown of social habits under conditions which make difficult the reconstruction of those habits, that is, of a new social order.

Such social disturbances as revolutions, with their confusion, anarchy and conflicts between classes, are distinctly pathological, but we may note that there is often a period of confusion in the transition from one social habit to another, which is normal, because it may take some time for a large mass of individuals to discover an adequate stimulus for the building-up of a new social co-ordination. We see this with reference to the family in the United States at the present time. The old authoritative semi-patriarchal family of past generations has broken down. As a form of institution it will no longer work under modern conditions. As yet, however, the mass of people have not yet been able to discover a sufficient stimulus in any social ideas or ideals for the reconstruction of the family upon a new and stable basis. While a new ethical family of stable type has emerged among certain elements of our population, other elements are in a condition of confusion as regards their family life and have not developed any new and stable type of the family adapted to the new life-conditions. Moreover, we should further note that as the number of individuals increase in a group and as they become more and more differentiated, there is greater possibility of conflict of

⁴ See article on "A Psychological Theory of Revolutions" in *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XI (July, 1905).

habits within the group, and greater difficulty of constructing new harmonious social co-ordinations. Hence, large social groups are dependent for their existence upon improved means of communication and especially upon improved systems of education which will gradually adapt individuals to the new and complex social life-conditions before they actively participate in the carrying-on of the collective life-process.

Illustrations might be multiplied to show that from the standpoint of social co-ordination, that is from the standpoint of social habit and adaptation, all social phenomena may be psychologically interpreted; that all the forms of interstimulation and response, that is, all social phenomena, come in in getting new social co-ordinations; and that in order to interpret these phenomena correctly we must show their function in the collective life-process. Enough, perhaps, has been said, however, to show that this psychological view of society is an exceedingly fruitful one and that through use of it we may develop not only sound social theories, but also rules for guidance in social work.

DISCUSSION

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I do not wish to be captious over terms used by Professor Ellwood. The terminology of sociology is still in the squatter stage, in which title is given by priority on the ground, rather than by tradition, or even fitness. To secure more definiteness and uniformity in usage—surely a present sociological need—is a task which, before long, might perhaps be undertaken by some committee of the American Sociological Society.

I must, however, raise a question concerning one of Professor Ellwood's conceptions—that to which he applies the title "social co-ordination." Neither the words nor his paper seem adequately to suggest the influence upon a society of the material environment. It is dangerous to lose grip of the fundamental fact that society consists of human beings, biological individuals, who through mutual interaction with each other *and* with their material environment, are attaining to a larger control of their own and of nature's powers. There is *mutual* interaction and influence not only between individuals in a society but between individuals and environment. Social life is not merely that progressive correlation between individual actions which Professor Ellwood's term "co-ordination" suggests—the cor-

relation involves the material environment also. It is exactly such a process of correlation with which biologists, especially since Darwin, have dealt under the name of *adaptation*. It seems to me that even if Professor Ellwood may be said to recognize the environment in his paper, he does not adequately emphasize it, nor the mutual character of its relations in the process of individual and communal change.

I cannot but feel also, that, given a proper emphasis, the term adaptation describes the process most fittingly, and most in accord with the developing historical traditions of our subject.

Professor Ellwood's paper is a swift review of a broad field. It flies over this field, perhaps at a dangerous distance away from earth. While endeavoring to avoid a detailed critique, I have thought it worth while to delve below the surface, in order to discover the assumptions on which such a paper is based. I have found these assumptions interesting because they prove to underlie not only Professor Ellwood's paper but all the chief studies made from the same point of view. We may call them, in fact, the long-utilized but only partially formulated premises of psychological sociology.

These premises are:

1. *Social unity*.—A society is a unity, functional, not organic, of mutually interrelating, coinfluencing parts.

Though overworked and distorted by the old "biological school," this premise has been part of the modern sociologist's stock since Spencer.

2. *The interaction of minds*.—Society is a nexus of *similar minds which interact*. The "minds" are "similar" within limits of normal variation and their interaction is mutual.

This thought has been employed more or less for three generations, but was first fully utilized by Gabriel Tarde.

3. *The range of mental interaction*.—The range is limited only by the natural conditions imposed by the varying power of different minds to apprehend stimuli and to respond. Artificial limits upon mental interaction such as social caste or class, are not assumed in general sociological theory.

I wish to point out that this third premise has been tacitly assumed in the psychological sociology of all recent writers, from Tarde or Durkheim to Giddings, Ross, or Professor Ellwood himself. Where limits upon the range of mental interaction are considered, these limitations are regarded as exceptional or as special cases as contrasted with the fundamental general case.

This premise has been assumed, not formulated, and it has not been perceived that we have in the premise nothing less than the psychological formulation of *democracy*. The society to which the third premise applies is a society working under, or to, the democratic ideal—or, rather, in so far as the third premise actually applies, in just so far as the society actually democratic.

Consider a social grouping sundered by caste lines. Mental stimuli do not pass from caste-men to men of another caste without essential alteration in kind, just because these stimuli are known to originate in the other caste. This felt separation works a fundamental qualitative alteration in the reaction to the stimulus. Between the two castes may be a co-ordination—a relation as of master and servant, exploiter and exploited, but not that kind of relation which we regard as social in the ethical and democratic sense. The third premise does not here apply. Just in so far as lines of recognized class differences separate groups in a society like England, or lines of economic cleavage divide groups in America today, does the third premise fail of application, and in that measure our society fails to be democratic. An inductive sociology, in order to offer an accurate interpretation of the society, would have to make its premises to fit these conditions.

To enter into this thought needs more than a ten-minute paper. I wish however to make one application, viz., that what Professor Ellwood has said about "co-operation" does not sufficiently cover the point. I quite agree that "co-operation" is not the best term to describe the social process, not so good a word as "co-ordination" or "adaptation." Co-operation has an ethical implication. It is a teleological term, meaning adaptation to the *mutual benefit* of the units or factors coadapted. Now the democratic ideal enforces co-operation as a social goal. In a large sense co-operation is *the* social goal—although we must generously understand that co-operation as a human social ideal is to be achieved through many forms of individual relation—through emphasis in some places upon individual as well as in other places upon communal action. Sociology does not seem to me to have accepted fully the practical applications to social programmes and public policies, of its own premises and doctrines. Perhaps we had best say that sociology has not *worked out* these applications. Is not that very task—the analysis of our own premises and their vigorous following-up till we bring them flush with, and express them in terms of, concrete present social problems—is not this task more urgent than the building of further systems of theory?

EDWARD C. HAYES, THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

When people disagree too radically there is likely to be little immediate prospect of gain from discussion, but when one is so nearly in agreement with another as I am with Professor Ellwood, then discussion is particularly inviting and there is good ground for hoping that it may lead us a step nearer to the truth.

We used to hear a great deal about "the social mind," but the realization that society involves many separate consciousnesses, and has no inclusive single consciousness, forced the recognition that that phrase is only a figure

of speech. Further investigation of the essential nature of society reveals the fact that the reality which we vaguely and inaccurately conceived under the name "social mind" was society itself, and gives us back the concept which we temporarily had lost, now amplified and rendered more exact.

Society is the interdependent activities which go on in individual streams of consciousness. Every atom of primary social reality is in the consciousness of someone, though that which is in the consciousness of any *one* is only a tiny portion of the vast whole. If this process of interdependent activities were to cease—this believing, desiring, working, fighting—society would not be. A population of human animals without these interwoven activities would not be a society, the biological phenomena of human life are external conditions of the reality which sociology has to explain. All the facts that sociology can explain are psychic facts, except in so far as the explanation of psychic activities explains their immediate consequences, the overt deeds or works of man.

My criticism of Professor Ellwood's paper is upon a matter of emphasis assigned to *activities* and the *relations* between activities. He said, "Society is a plexus of interactions . . . dependent on psychic activities"; I should reverse that and say that society is a plexus of psychic activities dependent upon their interactions.

This is not a *mere* matter of emphasis. There is no more fundamental methodological question than: What is to be explained, and what kind of causal relations furnish the explanation? The interwoven *activities* are the realities to be explained; the relations between them are the *main* factors in the explanation. There is no third reality to be called "*interactions*," apart from activities and the relations between activities by which they condition each other.

The tendency to describe society, our object of explanation, in terms of relation or "interaction," rather than in terms of prevalent activities, may be due to a sociological bias; sociologists must investigate *social* realities, and interrelationships are obviously social. But prevalent activities are just as certainly and essentially social. They are social, first, because they are not merely individual but *prevalent*; and, second, because for every individual these prevalent activities constitute the social environment in which he moves, the vast and intricate whole the evolution of which from small beginnings genetic sociology must make intelligible; and, finally, because the individual's own participation in the process is socially caused and conditioned—any one of us would find it hard to name a single belief, ambition, endeavor, practice, or any activity, beyond what is due to the mere physical functioning of his animal organism, which he would carry on as he does if his life had been isolated. The individual's stream of conscious activity is his share in the social process and except as such would be impossible to him.

That which we vaguely conceived and called "the social mind" is society.

The reality which sociology is to explain is the process of interwoven activities which condition each other and are conditioned also by the biological traits of the species and of its different races and individuals, and by the natural environments in which they live, and by the modifications of the physical environment produced by their own work. None of these conditioning phenomena can sociology explain save as an explanation of the direct consequences of social activities is involved in the explanation of those activities which themselves are the only ultimate objects of sociological investigation.

May we convert the statement of Professor Ellwood into this: Society is a process of interwoven activities mutually conditioned by their inter-relationships?

E. A. ROSS, THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

I am in entire agreement with Dr. Ellwood in regarding society as essentially psychical. Sound in substance and admirable in form, his paper expresses, I think, the view upon which the best lines of sociological thought are converging. It is likely that the point I am about to make is a supplement rather than a criticism of his theory.

In some the paper may leave the impression that co-ordinated activity among men is but the visible consequence of agreements in beliefs or emotional attitudes. But this, I fancy, is altogether too simple a view of the matter. Men co-operate in order to realize certain obvious advantages or to avoid certain evils, but often they don't like it. They have had to force themselves to override their individual preferences, and so they seek redress by criticism and dissent. They take their revenge for having to make sacrifices and work together by indulging themselves in sharper opposition in the subjective sphere. For we are liable to forget what gnarly, rough-barked, cantankerous natures have to be brought into social co-operations. A certain German philosopher confesses that he detects in himself "a gentle, often scarcely conscious, and even immediately vanishing, impulse to say 'no' to an assertion or an appeal!" Recall the Irishman who was always "agin' the government." Recall Robert Ferguson, of whom Macaulay said "His hostility was not to popery or to Protestantism, to monarchical government or to republican government, to the house of Stuart or to the house of Nassau, but to whatever was at the time established."

Such natures—and many of us have this streak—suffer when the steam roller of social co-ordination passes over them, and they "take it out" in the psychical sphere by protest and contradiction. This is why free criticism of government averts revolt. A *Douma* may be a safety valve which, by giving vent to irritations, actually aids government to command obedience. A *Beschwerde-Buch* is a good thing to offer the public

even if no attention is paid to the complaints entered in it. To many, the inhibitions and conformities exacted by our complicated society would be intolerable, but for the "kicking" and "knocking" with which they are able to solace themselves. Co-ordinated activities, then, instead of being the outward sign of inward harmony among men, may only record the pressure of circumstances or necessity upon the co-operators, and may actually swell the volume of criticism and controversy in which they seek to find relief.

H. P. FAIRCHILD, BOWDOIN COLLEGE

There is one criticism which it seems to me might be made upon this excellent and suggestive paper. This is that the author has given undue emphasis to the conscious element in the change of social habits, customs, folkways—call them what you will—to the exclusion of the unconscious or subconscious element. If I caught his point correctly, he stated that the course of events was as follows: A certain social habit fails to meet the requirements; people observe that it is no longer serving its purpose; by means of conversation and communication, criticism and discussion take place; new ideas arise, and in the course of time public opinion is changed in respect to the matter and through the force of public opinion the social habit is changed. The truth of this proposition is indubitable, and I should not wish to question it. But is it not equally true that the social habits have an equally decisive effect in determining public opinion?

One of the greatest lessons which Professor Sumner has taught us is that the social habits, or folkways, or *mores*—to use his own word—change and grow and develop in response to forces which defy detection or description by the human mind. To use his own simile, they are like a mass of shifting clouds, constantly changing, no one knows how or why. The forces which cause the changes in the *mores* are inherent in the *mores* themselves, and the *mores* are what determines public opinion.

We have here simply one of those great social paradoxes, against which the sociologist constantly comes in his efforts to solve the problem of society. Two apparently contradictory propositions appear to be equally true. There is no better illustration than that furnished by the old question whether the growth of language conditions thought, or the growth of thought conditions language. It is impossible to conceive of any developed thought without language, and just as impossible to conceive of any formulated language without developed thought. Yet if one chose to look at only one side, one might build up an impressive argument for the absolute supremacy of either one of these factors.

So it is, all through the field of sociology, and one of the profoundest mistakes to which the sociologist is liable is the failure to grasp the fact that two propositions which appear diametrically opposed may both be true.

The recognition of this fact would do much to solve some of the apparent problems of sociology and would obviate many a heated discussion.

CARL KELSEY, THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Unfortunately I was unable to hear all of Dr. Ellwood's paper and I rise to speak merely because of one sentence whose acceptance or rejection is a matter of some importance. Dr. Ellwood has traced the beginnings of our social institutions to the instincts and has intimated that all sociologists admit the validity of his derivation. Personally I am inclined to sharply disagree. I do not know what instincts are and believe that no one else does. I am coming steadily to the opinion that, in the main, the word instinct is the recourse of baffled thinking. In other words, that it is a term to cover ignorance and really explains nothing. We might just as well say we do not know. It may be retorted that if this is true the development of sociology as a science must wait until firmer biological and psychological bases are established. This may be true but that does not justify the use of this method by sociologists. If necessary, it is better to wait than to deceive ourselves by pseudo-explanations.

PROFESSOR ELLWOOD

I find myself in the happy situation of agreeing with nearly all the remarks of the preceding speakers, except those of Professor Kelsey. Of course, in a paper like the one I have just presented which attempts to outline a whole system of psychological sociology, it is not possible to do more than present the salient points. Necessarily, therefore, I left out many qualifications which I should like to have introduced into the paper had space permitted. Many of these qualifications have been very happily presented by those who have discussed the paper; and I accept nearly all of them, if I understand them, with the exception of the criticisms offered by Professor Kelsey. Professor Ross's remarks, for example, were distinctly supplementary to the point of view which I presented in my paper, as he himself recognized. Communication for its own sake is in no way inconsistent with the functional explanation of communication that I gave in the paper. It is a rule that all processes in nature tend to overflow, as it were, the limits of their utility. Thus, while communication originates in the needs of a common life-process and exists for the sake of perfecting that process, yet a good deal of communication may possibly exist in human society which has no reference to the life-process; that is, it apparently exists for its own sake. The same is true of conflict. While conflict originally arose either as a struggle between competitive groups or as a result of certain disharmonies of association within groups, yet certain indi-

viduals, after having acquired the habit of conflict, keep it up for its own sake and find such pleasure in combat and opposition that they keep up these processes without reference to whether they have any function in the life-process or not.

I also accept nearly all that Dr. Davis said in criticism of my paper. I think he is wrong, however, in saying that my statement does not adequately recognize the element of environment, for the influence of the environment is, of course, brought in under the head of stimulus. Therefore, this term makes it possible to recognize to the fullest degree all environmental influences modifying social co-ordinations or forms of association. As to the relative felicity of Dr. Davis' term "coadaptation" and my term "social co-ordination" I would say that I am not particularly wedded to the term "social co-ordination." If the term "coadaptation" is a happier one to express the ideas that I have set forth I am willing to use it and must leave that to you to decide. What Dr. Davis says about my premises is, of course, entirely correct, but I would say that these premises are necessary common-sense postulates and that to question them would involve us in metaphysics. As to what he says about my sociology not applying to a society in which there is caste or in which there is a hard and fast separation between groups or classes, I would say that I think that it can be made to apply very readily if we remember that we are then dealing with two or more relatively separate and unified groups, and that the question then becomes a question of the co-ordination between groups instead of a co-ordination of individuals.

With most that Professor Hayes says, I think I also agree, if I understand him, although he seems to me to lean toward a social realism which I cannot indorse. Certainly there is no such thing as social activity apart from the activities of individuals, and it seems to me that Professor Hayes does not sufficiently take note of the biological individual as a relatively independent element in all social activity and function. I certainly see no objection to the term "social habit." If we speak of social activities, then persistent social activities may certainly well be termed social habits, just as persistent activities in the individual are termed habits. Moreover these persistent social activities rest upon habitual ways of acting in the mass of individuals.

I cannot agree that my paper does not recognize the element of unconsciousness in social change, though, perhaps, I have failed to develop sufficiently that thought. I distinctly said, however, that many of these processes involved in social change, the individual is often unconscious of. This follows from the fact that habit and instinct play such a part, not only in maintaining a certain order in society, but also in bringing about social changes.

I must take exception, however, to Professor Kelsey's criticism of my paper. I am surprised at Professor Kelsey's criticism of my use of the

term "instinct" and his questioning the instinctive origin of society. I spoke of the instinctive *origin* of society; I did not claim that instinct goes far to explain modern social organization; only that it was a proper *psychological* statement of primitive social organization. If sociologists are not yet awake to the importance of instinct in explaining social origins and also as a factor even in present society, it is high time that they were becoming so. Professor Kelsey says that the term instinct is no explanation, means nothing. No one claims that it is a final explanation. When we have referred anything in society to an instinct or a native impulse, then it is the duty of the psychologist to explain the origin of that instinct. If the sociologist must explain everything to its final terms then he will land in physics and even in metaphysics. The psychological sociologist has performed his task when he has traced any phenomenon in society back to an original psychical element in the individual. The biological sociologist may, of course, go farther. In any case, the sociologist cannot reject the conception of instinct and instinctive reaction without rejecting all modern psychology. Professor Kelsey's position seems, therefore, to me to negative the right of the sociologist to explain processes in psychological terms, and, to my mind, that means to negative scientific sociology itself.